

Driving Tips for Cleaner Air

When you are in your car, how can you maximize your fuel economy?

Don't speed. Driving 75 mph instead of 65 mph will lower your fuel economy by about 10 percent. Pride yourself on being a slowpoke.

Avoid "jack rabbit" starts. Flooring the gas pedal wastes gas and leads to drastically higher pollution rates.

Anticipate stops. Think ahead to anticipate stops so your vehicle can coast down. Accelerating hard and braking hard wastes gas, increases pollution, and wears out your brakes.

Keep your tires properly inflated. For every 3 pounds below recommended pressure, fuel economy goes down by about 1 percent.

Avoid rush hour, if possible. Stop-and-go driving burns gas and increases emissions of smog-forming pollutants.

Travel light. An extra 100 pounds in your trunk reduces fuel economy by about 1 percent.

Combine trips. Warmed-up engines run more efficiently and generate less air pollution.

Leave off the air-conditioning, if possible. AC increases fuel consumption, increases smog-forming NOx emissions in some vehicles, and involves environmentally damaging fluids. At high speeds, open windows increase drag; use vents if possible.

Check your own fuel economy every few weeks. If you notice the numbers slipping, then think about how your driving might have changed, and consider getting a tune-up or an oil change.

Drive less. Give your car a rest by taking public transportation, riding a bike, or walking. The exercise will do you good.

Idle your engine less. While waiting to pick up your child at school, waiting in the drive-thru, or any other time when you are not on the road and in motion, turn off your engine! This can result in significant fuel savings and air quality benefits.

